

ON FOCUS

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JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION

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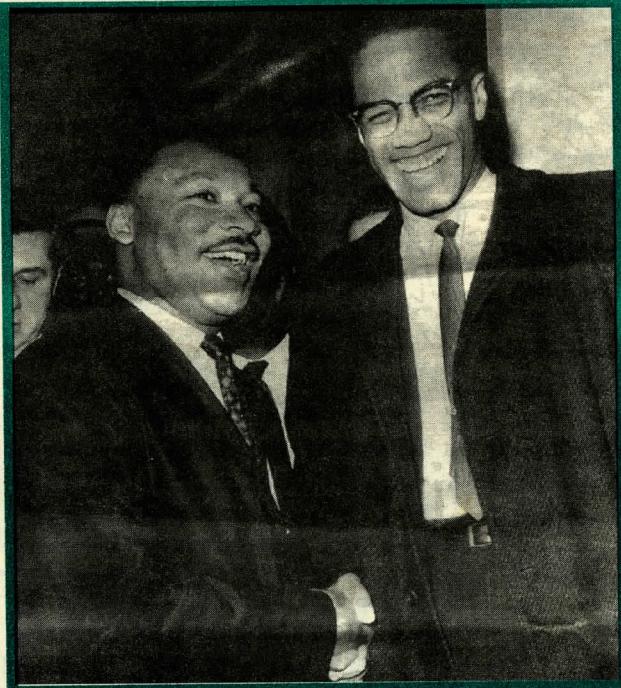
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WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM: A VICTORY FOR BLACK PEOPLE



*They had differing views but believed in REPARATIONS.
L - R Martin Luther King Jr. Malcolm X*

"Old pirates yes they rob I
Sold I to the merchant ships
Minutes after they took I from
The bottomless pit
But my hand was made strong
By the hand of the almighty
We forward in this generation
Triumphantly
All I ever had is song of freedom
Won't you help to sing these songs
of freedom
Cause all I ever had redemption
Song, redemption songs"

These are the poetic words of Bob Marley, the cultural revolutionary artist, perhaps the most influential and compelling artist ever to have reacted against and rejected white supremacy. He understood white domination and

JCA's web page/address - Web Site: www.jcassoc.com • E-mail: info@jcassoc.com

centuries of Black dehumanization. Marley was relentless in his struggle to restore the light of human dignity in equality, fraternity and liberty for African people.

Bob Marley, understood that our ancestors were struck down to the lowest depths of humanity and denied a voice for centuries. He, like they, must be very pleased from within their graves about the recently concluded World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa. The victory in Durban, represents new prospect, opening new doors for Africans and African descendants all over the world. Today, we have much more than redemption songs. We have agreement that reparations is in order, and with reparations, hope and aspiration to undo some of the centuries of dehumanization resulting from slavery and colonialism.

The Western European Countries, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, having sensed defeat during the regional Preparatory Conferences, did everything possible to manipulate the Conference in their attempt to ensure that this extraordinary World Conference Against Racism was a failure. But they failed miserably.

Among the visible manipulation and

manoeuvring tactics was the attempt by the United States, working through the World Bank and through the UN bureaucracy, to effectively control delivery of a meaningless statement from the "civil society" and manipulating of the NGO's by way of financial inducements.

When all else failed, the US Government decided to boycott the Conference and unleashed a string of propaganda accusing the victims of racism of being racist. Many so-called journalists in the mainstream media, simply parroted whatever the US and other Western governments had to say. Not one investigated the stories to determine validity and reliability.

In Europe, a number of governments and NGO's were actively excluding Africans and African descendants living in Europe from participating in the preparatory process. Some were

Continued on Page 4

QUARTERLY MEETING

Sunday
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2:00 pm

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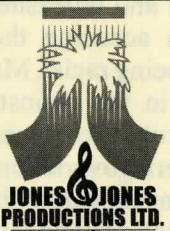
JCA at (416) 746-5772

EDITORIAL

In this the first issue of *In Focus* for 2002, Black History Month, Reparations and lest we forget, the Jamaican Canadian Association will commemorate its 40th anniversary on August 06. The JCA has much to celebrate throughout this year.

Special tribute should be paid to all our members, friends and the Fundraising Committee, without whose tireless efforts and commitment, the JCA would cease to exist. The efforts of the Fundraising Committee are successful because of our volunteers. Special 'Thank You' to the many very hardworking members for their commitment and support.

The New Years Gala was a success



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and was the place to be. By the time this newsletter hits the stands, many would have danced the night away to the thrilling sounds of the Merritone's at our annual Beat the Winter Blahs Dance. The highly anticipated "Boonoonoonus" Brunch will be taking place on February 10, 2002. Get your tickets by calling 416-746-5772 and "Come out and eat till you belly bust"! Great fun and games will be had by all. Stay tuned for the launch of JCA's Bi-Annual Car Raffle, to be held on March 01, 2002. Tickets will be available throughout the GTA.

The JCA is always looking for committed dedicated people with varying expertise to join our team. Make 2002 a memorable year and do what you can to help the Association continue to change lives and fundraise for our worthy community centre. Remember donations help JCA fulfil its purpose.

IN FOCUS
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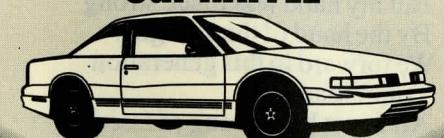
Letters and submissions welcome. The Editorial Committee reserves the right to edit materials for length.

JCA
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40

Years of
Caring and Sharing
August 6, 2002

Join the Board,
Membership, Staff
as we celebrate
through-out 2002
Stay tuned

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7,



President's REPORT

By Valarie Steele

our youth being over-represented in the prison system is both evidence of a kind of terrorism and provides the means for continuing terror;

the drop-out rate of our children from the school system is indication of yet another form of terrorism...

And, from your own encounters with racist beliefs and systemic practices, I know you can add other forms of terrorism.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish you a happy and prosperous 2002. Be generous with the time you spend with your family and community the time you invest with both will be the most important of the many things you will do. As you spend time looking after your family and working with your community, open wide the lines of communication; that is always helpful in building relationships.

"The year that was" has closed with a whimper rather than a bang and we at the JCA continue to work tirelessly on your behalf. As we journey on in the new millennium, stop and reflect on the year that was and seriously think about what you as an individual can do to change the way things currently are in the African Canadian Community.

From where I am viewing the landscape, this is a time when collectively we must rise and ensure that we push for major adjustments in order to uplift our Community. The events of September 11 have arrested the concerns of us all, and rightly so, because they have changed much of the world as we knew it. As a people renowned for caring we feel deeply for the many innocent victims of the acts and their aftermath. We hope that their families found some comfort in the message of the holiday season.

In another way, the events of September 11 also serve to bring home to us -- most forcefully -- what we as a people have endured for hundreds of years because of the unfairness of western societies. This legacy of unfairness continues today. While I do not in any way seek to downplay the gravity of September 11, I know you will understand when I say that in our experience:

racism is a form of terrorism;
unfair employment practices
are a form of terrorism;
targeted, over policing of our
Communities is a form of
terrorism;

Over the years, the Jamaican Canadian Association has served the Community very well. We will be 40 years old in 2002 and we will be here to serve you for another 40 years and counting. We are asking for your continued support in all we do. One of our fundraising events for 2002 is asking for a minimum of \$40.00 to help pay down our mortgage. Our "Christmas Stocking" is available now for your contribution and will be hanging all year!

We have not received a cent from any level of government to buy, or pay, for our Community Centre. Every cent that has been paid to date is from you. The Association is deeply grateful for your support and on behalf of the Community we thank you. Our continued success depends on your support. Let us have another 40 years of even greater achievements.

Let us hold hands and walk together in Harmony, Peace, Love, Respect and Determination so that we can rise together. May your God richly bless you.

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To establish a Scout Movement. The Scout Movement will provide stimulating indoor and outdoor programs for young people from 5-26 years. Scouts Canada and members of the Canadian Armed Forces will provide the necessary training and guidance in operating the group. For further information, please contact **BARRY MORRISON** at the JCA, 416-746-5772

WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM: A VICTORY FOR BLACK PEOPLE

Continued

even so obnoxious as to be claiming to be speaking on behalf of African people, as if we are voiceless.

When confronted, many of the same people who wanted African people to remain silent, retreated to barbarism by telling our brothers and sisters living in Europe that Slavery and Colonialism were good for Black people. Thus, the criminals' injury against African people was again compounded with insult.

Many European official delegates exerted pressure on some of the most vulnerable African countries by trying to induce them with offers of bribes. Several African delegates reported they were asked "How much?" Western countries that have never entertained the idea of debt cancellation were promising such only if the African countries drop the discussion on reparations and colonialism. But we stand firm. Knowing that slavery and colonialism are responsible for racism and the economic underdevelopment in Africa, the Caribbean, South and Central America. The same conditions are responsible for the economic and cultural impoverishment and social marginalization of Black people in Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The offers were rejected. We are not for sale!

What was the fundamental issue at the World Conference?

The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade began in 1502. According to the great modern Jamaican scholars Philip Sherlock and Hazel Bennett, "the first Africans to come to the Americas were brought by their masters to Hispaniola in Ovando's fleet in 1502. One of them "escapes to the Indians" soon after arriving. Escapes was our first form of resistance to the barbarism that slavery was.

By 1510 the slave trade began to

intensify. The first consignment of African slaves going through Spain to Portugal for sale in the West Indies.

This then, began the business of making money by engaging in this terrible traffic in Africans as cargo. Also, it is significant to note that this was in fact the first of the world's criminal genocides and one of the worst crimes against humanity, in all of human history. The Europeans on the one hand ruthlessly exterminated the Indians (Tainos and Arawaks) and on the other hand, embarked on the massive slave trade, that is, the systematic, ruthless, and criminal acts of reducing another race to "Things" to be bought and sold in the market place.

History shows, unmistakably so, that the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade assumed monumental proportions by 1650, when sugar became the main crop and one of the most precious commodities in Europe. The sugar industry was privatized, organized by private companies which enjoyed the political and military backing of their governments, Kings and Queens alike, as well as the Churches, including the Pope, who was acknowledged as head of Christendom. Modern capitalism, as Eric Williams so meticulously noted, took its shape and form of governance, domestic and international, from slavery.

The first English voyage to West Africa was in 1530, led by William Hawkins. Queen Elizabeth 1 and other members of the British aristocracy directly sponsored Hawkins. Hawkins and his royal sponsor accumulated tremendous wealth from this inhuman action of trading African people as cargo and reducing African people to "things" and indexing us in their account along with horses, asses, mules, picks, forks and shovels. So began the worst sufferings ever inflicted on a people, our enslavement in the New World by Europeans motivated by greed for wealth.

The European plunder of Africa was to continue. The kidnapping of Africans took on unprecedented proportions that provoked envy, among the European powers. First the Spanish sought to compete with the Portuguese who

claimed monopolist right over the trade routes, as sanctified by the Papal Bull in 1455. This Papal Bull, authorized the Portuguese to become fortune hunters and to reduce to servitude all infidel people. The use of the word "infidel" made all others inferior to Christians. Therein lies the root of racism in all its forms. The domination of the African race by Europeans could not be justified by greed. Racism did the justification.

Space does not allow me to expand on the full magnitude of the crime committed against humanity by the European powers in Africa and against African people. However here is some statistical data to give you some sense of the attendant terror and horror that lasted for centuries.

France: Between 1700 to 1793 a total of 3,321 French ships collected slaves in Africa and landed over one million Africans in the New World. A total of 1,143, or over a third of these ships, came from Nantes alone. All of these Africans were sold as property.

British: Between 1701 to 1810 British ships transported an estimated 2,467,000 slaves from Africa. All of these Africans were sold as property.

It's estimated that between the Portuguese, the Spanish, the British, the French, the Dutch, the great powers of Europe, they kidnapped 10 million people out of Africa. It is also estimated that another 6-7 million died in the horrible Atlantic crossing.

The largest slave purchaser was Brazil, with an estimated 31 per cent of the total. The British was second with 23 per cent in the Caribbean. Followed by the French Caribbean taking 22 percent; Spanish America with 9.6 per cent; the Dutch Caribbean with 7.6 per cent, English North America (Canada and the USA) 6 per cent and Danish Caribbean with 0.4 per cent.

There are demographic breakdowns by age and sex for a tenth of the 27,000 slaving voyages, which took

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Membership Services

submitted by
Pauline Reid, Membership Chair

Immigrants, Youth, Unemployed, Single Mothers, those that have been abused, and the list goes on, can walk into the halls and offices of the JCA, located at 995 Arrow Road, Toronto, Ontario and be served based on their specific needs. That, is an incredible feat! Achieved through blood, sweat and tears literally!

We are truly proud of our founders and are grateful that the dream continues to be alive. So, as we celebrate our 40th Anniversary throughout 2002, come and join with us. If you are already a member, REMEMBER that it is time to renew your membership.

It is important that you renew your membership, NO LATER than March 31, 2002, in order to be able to vote at the Annual General Meeting to be held in May 2002.

If you are not yet a member, well, NOW is the time to "come walk the

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miles with us". Call the JCA at 416-746-5772 or fill out the application form enclosed. We look forward to seeing you.

We welcome your support as we celebrate these 40 years. We are asking all JCA members and friends to make a one-time donation of \$40.00, representing \$1.00 for each year of JCA's existence. Although we are requesting this minimum contribution, we will graciously accept additional amounts. Post-dated cheques or visa will be accepted. We are further asking you to co-opt a friend and/or relative to match your contribution towards this worthy cause. This one-time donation will be completely directed to the mortgage payment on our lovely building. We anticipate your participation.

Our Volunteer/Membership Appreciation Evening will be held on Saturday, April 20 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the JCA Centre. Make this event a part of your April plans. Celebrate with us *JCA Celebrating 40 Years of Caring and Sharing*. Have a great 2002!

Impressions From The United Nation WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM (UN WCAR)

Submitted by: Jewel L. Crawford, MD
Founder and Chairperson The Atlanta Ad Hoc Committee for the UN WCAR

On February 16, 1965, in the last week of his life, Malcolm X addressed a packed gathering at Corn Hill Methodist Church in Rochester, New York. The theme of his talk was that the problem of racism was "not just an American problem but a world problem". He strongly urged African Americans to embrace other oppressed people in the world, especially other people of African descent. "Any kind of movement for freedom of black people based solely with the confines of America is absolutely doomed to fail," he said. Malcolm continued, "As long as you call it civil rights, it's a domestic problem within the jurisdiction of the United States government...but "human rights" is part of the Charter of the United Nations... when you call it human rights it becomes international. And then you can take your troubles into the World Court. You can take them before the world. And anybody on this earth can become your ally."

Fast-forward 36 years and 3 months later. Ironically, it was May 19, 2001, and on what would have been the 76th birthday of Malcolm X, I was on a flight headed to the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. I was on my way to attend the International Preparatory Meeting, better known as the PrepCom, for the upcoming United Nations World Conference Against Racism (UN WCAR) scheduled to be held in Durban, South Africa in August 2001.

I arrived on the scene of the PrepCom and found myself in a huge room in the Palais de Nations (Palace of Nations) at the UN headquarters. Seeing all the countries of the world sitting down together in the General Assembly to peacefully talk about the

future of humanity. Especially since the countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the neighboring islands make up the vast majority of the UN membership. The US and European Union however got busy right away to sabotage the PrepCom. They used every delaying tactic imaginable to waste time.

African and African Descendants Come Together

A few days after arriving in Geneva, I found myself in another meeting. Equipped with headphones to hear translations in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese, I sat down to a meeting of people of African descent from both the continent and the vast Diaspora to which we've been scattered. This was the meeting of the African and African Descendants' Caucus (AADC), first formed in the very first PrepCom meeting in Geneva the year before.

Three focus issues had been carefully selected by the one African American organization that had worked tirelessly for the past decade to get the UN to address the human rights violations of African descended people, the December 12th International Movement and Secretariat. The three issues were:

- The declaration of the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade as a crime against humanity
- Exposure of the economic roots of racism, and
- A call for reparations for the victims and the descendants of victims of the slave trade, colonialism and apartheid.

The AADC had an excellent, harmonious meeting that afternoon in Geneva. Talk about inspiring! This is exactly what Malcolm had advocated so many years before. It

was finally happening. We were doing what so many, with a "slave mentality", had deemed impossible, black folks from all around the world were working cooperatively together on our own behalf; the white man's worst nightmare. At this meeting, the three focus issues were adopted, in addition to a few others, as a platform for the AADC at that meeting.

Time ran out on the May 2001 PrepCom. The U.S. and European Union succeeded in wasting so much time that the UN delegates did not have time to complete their work. But they could only delay the process; we could not be deterred from our missions. Another PrepCom was planned before the UN WCAR, which most NGOs could not attend. For us, the next stop was Durban, South Africa.

Arriving in Durban

I knew that there was poverty in South Africa, but I wasn't quite prepared for what I saw. First of all there were the townships. There were hundreds of thousands of dwellings made of cardboard or tin, with plastic bags for a roof. Kids played in squalor; crime was rampant. It sounds strange but at least these people had homes. The worst thing for me was the homeless children. A lot was AIDS orphans, mostly boys on the streets. It seemed like hundreds of them, some as young as 5 or 6 years old. One after another they approached me, "Please Missy, I'm hungry", they said, holding out a frail hand for change and looking deep into my eyes. Sometimes I had a piece of fruit with me or a sandwich that they gobbled down voraciously. They were sleeping at night on the cold, hard concrete of the street. Some "lucky" ones had a blanket. A policeman told me that this was the tip of the iceberg. Most street kids had been rounded up and detained so they wouldn't "bother" the foreign



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The Jamaican Canadian Association Nominating Committee is recruiting candidates to fill positions on the Board of Directors, at the JCA's Annual General Meeting to be held in May 2002.

POSITIONS TO BE FILLED:

- President
- Executive Secretary
- Education Committee Chairperson
- Fundraising Committee
- Youth Affairs Committee

QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED:

- Must be a JCA member in good standing
- Must have good time management skills
- Must believe in the goals of the JCA
- Must be a team player
- Fundraising skills are desirable

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- The satisfaction of making a positive contribution to the community
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- Sheila Raymond (905)712-4955
- Fred Irving (416) 425-8222
- JCA (416) 746-5772

REPARATION WHAT IS IT?

Written by
D. Thompson

I repeat, Reparation is not a claim for money. It is not a penalty against white people. It is a claim, in justice, because a peaceful people in Africa centuries ago had their lives, their development, their religion, their very language and family life taken away from them when they were kidnapped. Not just once but millions of times. They were taken away across the ocean to become slaves, working without wages under the lash, in the sugar plantations and cotton fields to make their masters rich, while they remained poor.

This is not a long ago story, because, although slavery was abolished the twin evil of racial discrimination still exists today. When the slaves were sold in the markets, from that time, there was created a polarized society of white masters and black slaves. Although slavery was ABOLISHED, THE RACIAL BIGOTRY STILL REMAINS. WHEN A MAN IS HAULED BEHIND A TRUCK FOR MILES, because he is black, it exists. When a man is shot on the ground 30 times because he is black, it exists. No other race has ever suffered the heinous crime of the Atlantic Slave Trade but the African Race.

We cannot forget slavery; although we can forgive those whose conscience tell them to confess and to ask forgiveness for their forefathers whose assets they now enjoy in the countless ways of white privilege. If they enjoy the white privileges of their forefathers, surely they should in fairness inherit their liabilities as well. Although one does not inherit guilt one does inherit liability.

Let us not forget that when the founding fathers spoke of ALL men being created equal, they themselves had slaves. George Washington and President Jefferson themselves had slaves. The fact is they did not consider them people and did not answer up to their liability.

The wealth and privilege of the slave owner was passed on to their children and the benefits of so-called race superiority came down with it. The present generation did not inherit guilt but they most certainly inherited responsibility.

Today Reparation is not a punitive movement, but one of reconciliation towards an 'Inseparable Humanity'. It calls in the name of Justice that the countries who benefited by this gross crime should admit it, and after confession take such steps not necessarily monetary, but such as will assist the Black Renaissance towards the restoration of Black dignity, and equality; economically, culturally, politically, socially and otherwise, so that together we can make our own full contribution to God's world.

WHY REPARATION??

The basis of our claim, are on both moral and legal grounds. I need not stress the moral grounds. Kidnapping innocent people is always a sin as well as a crime. We have seen the pain and mental anguish in modern times when a child is kidnapped. Now, multiply that several million times and you will realize how the continent of Africa wept in silent anguish through the centuries.

Imagine the hardships of their journeys for weeks through the forests in unknown and hostile countries, to an ocean that they had never seen before. Cruelties such as chaining them together, and weighting them with loads, being thrown overboard to drown or be eaten by sharks; can be only imagined in the contemplation of man's inhumanity to man.

Morally there is a clear case Man cannot own man; only things. "Things" are what we were in the kidnappers eyes - disposable black things completely dehumanized.

Within the legal framework, the principle is that of unlawful enrichment. The law says that if one

party oppresses another unlawfully and enriches himself by that oppression and continues to do so, then, the oppressed party has a claim in law against the unlawful enrichment of the oppressor if he is not paid for the wrongful act. This law has been upheld in several international cases by the highest International Courts.

The Jews got over \$6billion as reparation for the horrible crime of the Holocaust. The Japanese-Americans got several million dollars for interning them in World War 2, with an apology from their own American Government. The Aborigines, the Eskimos, The Maoris, The Poles and others including the Korean women taken as sex slaves by the Japanese, all got huge sums and millions of acres for their sufferings. Only we, the Black people who suffered over a longer period than any of these and with many more sufferers, have not up to now even made a claim before the World Court.

United States Congressman Conyers has been trying for years just to discuss the matter, but his Resolution R40 has never been debated. Several famous lawyers like Mr. Charles Ogletree and others are putting together a case to be

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brought before the courts.

There are several things that have to be done by us. First the people must know their rights and sincerely believe in their cause. If this writer did not believe in the cause, I would not have spent so much time and effort with my other truly dedicated colleagues advocating our cause. We have to learn from the Jews who not only united all Jews under one banner but also authorized a responsible body to carry on negotiations. We must stop quarreling among ourselves, dividing our forces and follow the single strong strategy towards achieving success and the Black Renaissance.

Choose your leaders well. Do not just choose leaders because they are black, but choose real leaders who happen to be black. It is most important to know what we are asking for. Not money. We want an apology from those countries like England, the USA, France, Portugal, Holland and Spain who enriched themselves at the expense of the sweat and blood of our ancestors. We must listen to the words of Sir Winston Churchill - "It is our possession of the colonies and especially their wealth that enabled us to overcome the Napoleonic Wars and to succeed in the commercial struggles of the 19th century to become the supreme power that we are today."

There are other ways in which reparations can be paid. For example, Debt Relief from the heavy yoke we bear at the hands of those same countries. Also, consider an African Marshal Plan like the \$64 billion granted to Germany and the defeated ones after the 2nd World War. Africa suffered much greater devastation than they did and we did not fight them as enemies. A massive skills training programme for our youths could be another method and Power Sharing, where we would have Black representatives on world bodies like the IMF or World Bank.

It is vital however to teach every single one of our people that reparation must never slacken or reduce their self-reliance. Finally the emancipation cannot be considered COMPENSATION FOR THE SLAVES WHO TOILED FOR

YEARS. TODAY THE MOST MENIAL WORKER IS ENTITLED TO SEVERANCE PAY. No the debt was not paid. At a later stage when we got Independence still the Debt was not paid, we got our Governor, our Anthem, our Flag. We got the Crown but they kept the jewels. The economy was kept and still remain in their hands. No the Debt has not been paid.

There is an excellent book by Randall Robinson called 'The Debt'. Every serious black person should read that book. Keep it as your bible. He tells it all there. Finally, Believe in yourself, in your cause and in Justice. If you have the faith, God has the Power.

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Continued

place between 1667 and 1867. The eighteenth century slavery voyages- totalling nearly 17,000- carry slightly more men and quite a few more African children than had the slave trade of the previous century.

The proportion of males rose from 60.3 per cent to 65 per cent, while the proportion of children rose from 12.2 per cent to 22.7 per cent. Children were those under fifteen with few younger than ten, and of both sexes.

"The transatlantic slave trade also

I must also debunk a myth. The myth is that the Africans who were brought to the Americas were un-civilised. This is European propaganda written and passed off as history. What made the African so very needed by the European slave traders and planters, was the fact that many Africans had developed a highly sophisticated and advanced agriculture, and technological expertise which facilitated their integration into the rigid routine of plantation life. Sheila S. Walker, writing in her authoritative work "African Roots/ American Cultures" understood this historical reality and articulated this phenomenon very well. Here I quote.

African Diaspora societies and the resultant Black dispossession in the Americas are a direct result of slavery. Our history of racism is inseparable from slavery. The crimes committed against African people are one of the world's phenomena that has not yet been addressed.

1502 to 2001 is a long time and many years of opportunities for the Europeans to acknowledge that the enslavement of Africans was a crime against humanity. Reparations are more than the reimbursements for the economic losses of slavery and the subsequent institutionalized racism we continue to suffer. It is also a demand for a confession and admission of wrong.

The Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal defined crimes against humanity in these words. Here I quote

"Murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation and other inhumane acts committed against civilian population.... Whether law of the country where perpetrated."

Many Western governments including Canada, have refused to step out of their Eurocentric ways of seeing and interpreting the world. At the UN World Conference against Racism, one of the serious issues of our time was discussed. African people have a special perspective and interest in what and how issues are defined based on the logic of our own lives and the lives of our communities.

Why did so many western governments, many without consultations assume the privilege of speaking for us? Yet, still, many others

involved the very deliberate selection of Africans on the basis of their specific knowledge and skill that were needed for the development of the Americas. Therefore, this largest human migration also constituted the world's first massive brain drain and transfer of technology from Africa to the Americas, which established the basis for contemporary power relations in the Atlantic world."

Impressions From The United Nation WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM (UN WCAR)

Continued

visitors. It was winter in South Africa but for these children, winter lasted all year.

There were frequent demonstrations in the street, called by the labour unions against the privatization of the utility companies. I mentally removed Mandela and the leadership of the ANC from their pedestal. It seemed like the African National Congress had become African Negroes Co-opted. The ANC was no longer fighting for the people. The whites still owned everything. On a drive through the rural area, we drove for hours through white owned land. They still owned all the resources, the diamonds and the gold. HIV/AIDS was decimating the population and there was no national program to combat it.

The Youth Summit

The next morning I dropped my 17-year old daughter off to the Youth Summit. The young people there were impressive. They were from all over the world, mainly the Third World and the countries of the African Diaspora. They rolled up their sleeves and immediately got to work to produce a document that addressed racism as well as other problems. They completed their task in 2 days and with very little sleep. In addition to calling for culturally relevant education, health care, and reparations, they demanded that the occupied military camps like Vieques and Guantanamo be returned to their respective countries. This document was then turned over to Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for review for inclusion into the official UN document.

The Nongovernmental Organization

(NGO) Forum

This took place just prior to the UN WCAR. There was a lot going on. Thousands of people from almost all of the countries in the world were moving around Cricket Stadium speaking hundreds of languages. Together we represented all the victims of exploitation and injustice from around the world. The Dalits, the dark complexioned, lower caste of India, made their presence and grievances known with daily marches and drumming. The Palestinians shouted "Long Live Palestine" as they moved about. African Americans called press conferences to denounce the foreign policy of the Bush administration and its refusal to send a high level delegation to the conference. Meetings of all population groups went on constantly. The NGO Document outlining our grievances and proposed solutions was completed and finalized. The AADC met again and hearings were held on reparations, globalization and the impact of racism on all aspects of life. At the closing ceremony President Fidel Castro addressed the crowd. Revered by freedom fighters around the world, he walked onto the stage amid cries of Fidel, Fidel! Cuban flags were waved wildly throughout the crowd. Fidel stated that this system of capitalism with its ever-growing need for new markets was unsustainable. He recounted the work Cuba had done in the world to help liberate other oppressed people, including their role in helping to dismantle apartheid and the hundreds of doctors that Cuba has exported for medical assistance to the people of Africa. He reiterated the call for reparations for the victims of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. This was for me a high point of the NGO Forum. Overall, however, the most important thing to come out of the NGO Forum was an unprecedented opportunity to network with Africans, African descendants in the Diaspora and other oppressed people from around the globe. We began to

lay the groundwork for working together on an ongoing basis.

The UN WCAR

The atmosphere was tense; security was tight. The lobbying of the delegates to include our issues went on at an intensified level. The resistance of the U.S. and Europeans to including African people's issues in the documents that had started at the PrepComs continued. Israel joined in objecting to language that denounces its occupation of Palestinian territories, culminating in the arrogant walkout of the US and Israel. Supposedly the walkout was over language referring to the Middle East but the headline on the Durban Daily News the next day read "Slavery pay-out key to U.S. walkout". The article stated that the US walkout "was prompted by its fear of facing massive reparations claims for slavery from African Americans and not, as it implied by friction over the Middle East, senior diplomats said last night."

In spite of the walkout, at the conclusion of the conference, wording was in the document stating that **slavery was a crime against humanity and has always been so**, countering the argument put forth by those that enslaved us, that slavery was "legal" at the time.

During the WCAR, a forum was held called "Voices of the Victims". This was hosted by actor Danny Glover and Attorney Gay McDougal. Stories were told about the sheer barbarity of racist practices. Decapitations of Dalit leaders in India, dragging and shooting deaths of an African American men by racist whites and police in the U.S., and the vicious bulldozing of the homes of Palestinians by Israelis. The insanity of racism and the systems and governments that support it was apparent.

Continued on Page 13

10

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Continued on Page 13

WOMEN'S CORNER

ROSE FORTUNE 1753-1864

Taken from: Black Pioneers of Canada 2001 Calendar Published by Pan-African Publications
Submitted by the JCA Women's Committee

Taken from: Black Pioneers of Canada 2001 Calendar Published by Pan-African Publications

Rose Fortune settled in Annapolis Royal in 1763 when she was about 10 years old with her parents who came as Black Loyalists and were listed on the muster roll of 1784 as freemen. It is thought that the family accompanied their previous owners, the Devones, to Canada in anticipation of a land grant to start a new life.

Rose was well known and respected in the area. She had her own cartage company carrying baggage by wheelbarrow from the local docks. Her duties included pushing the loads of trunks, boxes and carpetbags from the wharf to homes and hotels. Until the early 20th Century, Annapolis Royal was a regularly used port for vessels sailing to Europe and the West Indies. Some of the shipping routes included Boston, Annapolis Royal, and Saint John, New Brunswick.

Rose's relationship with Judge Thomas Chandler Haliburton, a man of great importance in Eastern Canada and author of the well-known series *Slam Slick*, was well documented. As they were contemporaries, it was thought that her mother had been a domestic for the family when both were children. The sight of Judge Haliburton being hustled to catch the parquet to his next court sitting and her entreaty to "git along judge" as she transported

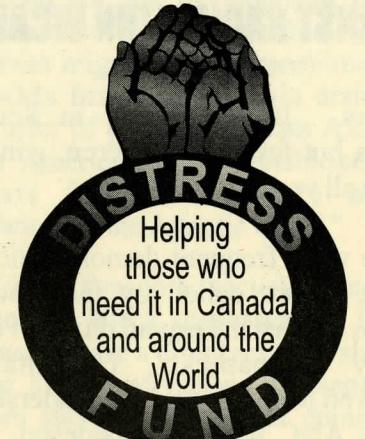
his bag in her wheelbarrow, has been frequently recorded.

In 1783, Rose also served as the first policewoman in Canada. Although this position was self-appointed, the curfew that she imposed on children was upheld and supported. She kept order on the wharf at Annapolis Royal. Her special responsibility was to walk with important people to the dock so they would arrive safely and on time to catch their boats.

Rose had two daughters, one of whom married into the Lewis family. Lewis' Transfer was established in 1864 as a transport business and remained in the Lewis family until 1965 when it was sold. The company continued to operate until 1976. A fifth generation granddaughter of Rose Fortune's, Dr. Daurene Lewis, followed her famous ancestor's lead by becoming the first Black woman in North America to be elected mayor.

Rose Fortune's image is immortalized on a set of porcelain and a watercolour at the Nova Scotia Public Archives.

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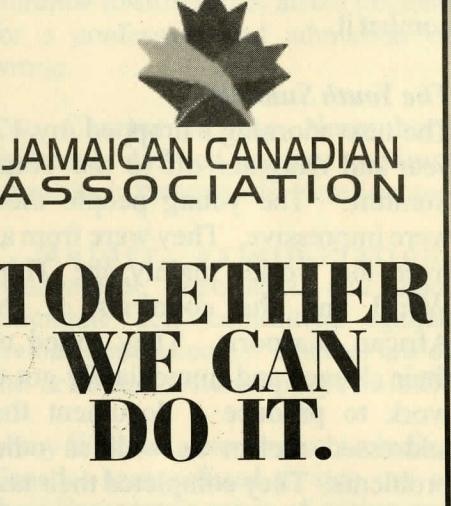
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WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM: A VICTORY FOR BLACK PEOPLE

Continued

who presume to represent us, while daily neglecting our concerns and claims to speak for us about the reparations that is so dear to us. The Canadian government did not support the majority view of African Canadians and our call for reparations; it was a mis-perception, as profound as it was wrong. Foreign Minister, John Manley, we are not voiceless and should not be treated as such.

That the Trans Atlantic Slave was the worst crime against humanity is without question. Reparations as a concept is not new. Slavery was abolished in 1834, the slave-holder was compensated for the loss of their slaves. In other words the criminals were rewarded for their crime. The victims, the slaves, were not compensated. Must we again, be left dispossessed?

Reparations is an issue of human rights and justice. Our call for the return of the wealth created by our ancestors through the pain of servitude, the suffering of racial oppression does not make us professional beggars. Calling for an

end to white supremacy does not make us racist, it makes us fighters for justice. The time for building a truly human history is now. Euro-Canadians, make the reparations issue part of your fight! Let us all stand up for justice.

Impressions From The United Nation

WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM (UN WCAR)

Continued

At midnight of the last night of the conference, the heated plenary session was ongoing. The plenary went on until the wee hours of the morning. In the end however, much of what we fought for had been included in the document.

We arrived home exhausted but exhilarated and enthusiastic about reporting back to our communities what had gone on. 36 hours after we arrived home, 2 planes crashed into the World Trade Centre. Folks asked me if I thought it had anything to do with the walkout of the US and Israel. I did not know. Unlike the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing, following September 11 an atmosphere of racism and terror directed by the U.S. Government against Arab and Asian men prevailed. This exemplifies what we, as black folks know all too well; that the United States is a racist country. We have lived with the terror of racism all our lives.

A downturn of the economy, the brunt of which has been borne by the working poor and people of colour have followed the events of September 11. The New York Times reports that in cities around the U.S. shelters are no longer able to accommodate all of the homeless families as more and more people are laid off of their jobs. In light of recent events, many of us have now reaffirmed our commitment to work for a world free of racism, poverty and economic exploitation.

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Dr. Jewel Crawford, Family Health Clinic Practitioner and Medical Officer: Atlanta Centre for Disease Control/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

Dr. Miriam Rossi, Paediatrician: Adolescent Medicine - Hospital for Sick Children; Professor of Paediatrics - Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto.

Vernellia Randall, Professor- Race and Racism in American Law; Race, Health Care and the Law- University of Dayton's Law School.

They will discuss how Racism affects health.

Date: Friday February 15, 2002

Time: 7: 00PM

Place: Jamaican-Canadian Centre

416 746-5772 (995 Arrow Road- West of Hwy 400, South of Finch)

For further information contact Errol Bonner (416) 746-5772 Ext. 225

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LIFE LESSONS FROM BOOKS & MOVIES

Life Lessons from Books & Movies

Do you ever watch Touched by An Angel? Interesting show with angels and archangels who are Black! I like that! God and the angels must look like the race! Black God and Black angels for Black people. Black for goodness and love.

Loving Della Reese's powerful voice lead me to buy her children's book: God Inside of Me. Your child will enjoy this story. I know that you set aside time each night to read to your children who need this special time with you. Didn't care for the illustrations but I loved the relationship between Kenisha and her brother Eli in this well developed story. It will make a great gift for a birthday. America is determined to show our people to the world through one set of negative lenses. Resist! Fill your child's mind with positive images.

Did you see those rappers on The American Award Show? Can you see how our children are influenced to feel that they should go around looking like that and become unfit for the job market and remain POOR? I tell all the children that I teach that entertainers are different from ordinary people and that if ordinary girls went around half-naked like Britney Spears no one would hire them! So love her and the music but live in the real world and prepare yourself for life.

If you plan to be a bank manager, visit a bank and see how the people who work



in the bank dress. I have never seen anyone dressed like a upper working in a bank! And what a joy it was to see Quincy Jones on the Oprah Winfrey Show and run out to get his book. I asked a friend if she was going to buy his book and she told me no because he didn't respect Black women! Q. grew up with whites, I think that there were 5 Blacks in a school of two thousand plus whites.

Today with so many beautiful Black sisters around many Black men still choose to stray and as Marcus Garvey said a long time ago the money gets passed on into other races. Should we judge others? The world has changed.

Unless children are indoctrinated at a very early age they will marry out of their race or religion. I loved the book and I am sure that you will too. As a race our priority should be the building of wealth which is then translated into power.

'Excellence is the best deterrent to racism and sexism.' [Jesse Jackson] Are you excellent at what you do? I try to be! Come laugh and listen to me Anansi stories at the JCA on February 17th. at 2:00 p.m. Our language was born out of the terror of the slavemaster's whip. We must keep it alive!

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QUARTERLY MEETING

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